Criteria for Tasks: What Makes a Good Task?

Rhode Island Department of Education

Explanation and Considerations for Use

This document describes the criteria and process that schools should take into consideration as they develop a system for identifying classroom tasks that should included in a student's graduation portfolio. "Portfolio-worthy" tasks should provide evidence of proficiencies required for graduation, be aligned to the GSEs and/or other appropriate standards and be evaluated according to a common standard.

What makes a good task for the portfolio?

- A "portfolio worthy" task will allow the student to produce evidence of particular proficiencies.
- A number of the tasks in the portfolio must be department or school validated. Schools are expected to create a process for validating tasks (often referred to as anchor tasks).

- ♦ The purpose of the approval process is to ensure that the task produces valid and reliable evidence of specific Expectations for Student Learning Individual schools will develop an approval process; there are also approval processes that may be adopted from statewide organizations (such as the Skills Commission). The Skills Commission provides templates for development and review of tasks in the Common Tasks Toolkit.

  - o A task is "approved" only for purposes of inclusion in the Graduation Portfolio. Teachers will submit for approval 2-4 tasks from the course assignments for each yearlong class; teachers of the same course should get together to work on these tasks.

    - ▪ Schools may adopt tasks from "task banks;" these would be a set of tasks that have already been pre-approved, and may be used by any teacher

The approval process should allow teachers to use "one-time" tasks. That is, some tasks may be appropriate only under certain circumstances. (For example, a school may have an artist-in-residence for one particular year, and wants students to create an entry for the portfolio based on that artist's specialty.) Unlike standardized assessments, which are used by many teachers across many schools, these "one-time" tasks can be approved for a particular year.

Rubrics to evaluate tasks should undergo a calibration and validation process to ensure consistency and fairness of scoring by different teachers. This process is described in the Common Tasks Toolkit and includes double scoring and scoring by persons other than the teacher who assigned the task.

(The approval process may be similar to how schools approve syllabi for new courses.)